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Letter dated 19 March 2015 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

The People's Republic of China held the presidency of the Security Council for the month of February 2015. An assessment of the work of the Council has been prepared under my supervision and in consultation with the other members of the Council (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) **LIU Jieyi**
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to the United Nations

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Annex to the letter dated 19 March 2015 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the presidency of China (February 2015)

Introduction

Under the presidency of China, in February 2015, the Security Council held 35 public meetings and informal consultations, adopted 7 resolutions and agreed on 2 presidential statements and 15 press statements.

Africa

Burundi

On 18 February, the Security Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2015/6) on Burundi. The Council welcomed the significant progress made by Burundi since the adoption of the Arusha Agreement in 2000, notably in the restoration of security and stability in the country, but noted that there remained challenges to overcome to ensure that the significant progress was not reversed, especially in the context of the 2015 elections. The Council welcomed the deployment on 1 January 2015 of the United Nations Electoral Observation Mission in Burundi (MENUB), and emphasized the need for the United Nations system and the international community, including the international financial institutions and Burundi's development partners, to maintain their support for peace consolidation and long-term development in Burundi.

Central African Republic

On 26 February, the Security Council heard briefings under "Other matters" from the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hervé Ladsous, and the Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Kyung-wha Kang, on the work of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) and the humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic, respectively. Mr. Ladsous briefed the Council on the Secretary-General's proposal to increase the number of uniformed personnel in MINUSCA. Ms. Kang briefed the Council on her recent field mission to the Central African Republic, where the humanitarian situation remained dire. She called for more international support and assistance for humanitarian relief, while stressing the importance of restoring peace and security across the country. Council members expressed grave concern over the general situation in the country and voiced their strong support for MINUSCA for the full implementation of its mandate.

Guinea-Bissau

On 5 February, the Security Council held a briefing and closed consultations on the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau (UNIOGBIS). The Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Guinea-Bissau, Miguel

Trovoada, and the Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, Antonio de Patriota, briefed the Council on the situation in Guinea-Bissau. Representatives of Guinea-Bissau, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries participated and made statements. Mr. Trovoada said that the new Government of Guinea-Bissau had worked hard to implement its national priorities. He suggested that the Council endorse the ECOWAS decision to extend the mandate of the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau beyond 31 December 2014 for a period of six months. Given the indication by ECOWAS that it had encountered difficulties with respect to its ability to continue shouldering the financial burden of the mission by itself, support from other partners was needed. He also reported that UNIOGBIS had played an important role in assisting the authorities in Guinea-Bissau in promoting inclusive political dialogue and national reconciliation and in combating impunity, drug trafficking and transnational organized crime. Mr. Patriota underlined that the country would require strong support from the United Nations, especially the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, to coordinate and focus international support on the Government's priorities.

During the closed consultations following the briefing, Council members commended the Government of Guinea Bissau for the strides that it had made towards sustainable peace, voiced their support for the ECOWAS Mission and welcomed the recommendation of the Secretary-General to extend the mandate of UNIOGBIS for a period of 12 months, until 29 February 2016.

On 18 February, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2203 (2015), extending the mandate of UNIOGBIS for 12 months.

Mali

On 6 February, the Security Council adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2015/5) in which it urged the Government of Mali and the relevant Malian parties to resume without delay the inter-Malian negotiation process in Algiers, and called on them to negotiate seriously and in good faith towards a comprehensive and inclusive peace agreement, while respecting the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of the Malian State. The Council also expressed its full support to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), reiterated its strongest condemnation of attacks against MINUSMA and emphasized that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and MINUSMA should play a leading role, in conjunction with the international community, to support and oversee the implementation of a future comprehensive and inclusive peace agreement signed by the Malian parties.

Libya

On 18 February, the Security Council held a briefing and closed consultations on the situation in Libya. The Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Bernardino León. Mr. León condemned in the strongest terms the horrific and brutal acts committed by terrorists in Libya in recent days and weeks and called for an effective strategy to combat the growing threats posed by terrorist groups. He welcomed the new round of political dialogue being held in

Ghadames and called for the next meeting to be held soon to finalize the formation of a government of national unity and security arrangements.

During the closed consultations that followed that meeting, Council members condemned the brutal killing of 21 Egyptian citizens in Libya and expressed condolences to the Egyptian Government and its people. Council members called for the terrorist threat in Libya to be addressed and urged all parties in Libya to continue their dialogue and engagement towards a political resolution of the Libyan crisis. Some members of the Council were cautious about lifting the arms embargo imposed on the Libyan Government and called on the Sanctions Committee to find a solution, and some members emphasized the importance of listening to the concerns of countries in the region.

Peace and security in Africa

On 10 February, the Security Council was briefed under "Other matters" by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Jeffrey Feltman, on his visit to Burkina Faso, Ghana and Togo. Mr. Feltman said that he had discussed preparations for the three countries' general elections in 2015 and 2016 with the three presidents and relevant stakeholders, and reaffirmed that the United Nations was committed to providing technical assistance for the elections. Mr. Feltman highlighted the most recent situation in Burkina Faso and stressed that the United Nations would continue to support the transitional authorities in the country. Following the briefing, some members of the Council emphasized the importance of holding free, fair and peaceful elections in the West African countries. They also called upon the international community to help the African countries to address the root causes of their instability.

Somalia

On 4 February, the Security Council held a briefing and closed consultations on the situation in Somalia. The Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Somalia (UNSOM), Nicholas Kay, as well as the African Union Special Representative for Somalia and Head of the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), Ambassador Maman Sidikou. Mr. Kay said that while 2014 had seen important progress in the campaign against Al-Shabaab, the State formation process and the establishment of some key institutions in Somalia, more progress was needed and that 2015 must be the year of federalism and delivery. The United Nations and other international partners would remain united and committed to peace, security and development in Somalia. Mr. Sidikou said that AMISOM and the Somalia National Army had launched two successful offensives in 2014, resulting in the recovery of 16 towns. They would continue to degrade the capabilities of Al-Shabaab in 2015.

During the closed consultations that followed that meeting, Council members called for the international community to continue to help the Federal Government of Somalia to advance the political process, eradicate the threat of Al-Shabaab, improve the humanitarian situation and promote peacebuilding and sustained development.

On 5 February, the President of the Council issued a press statement (SC/11769) on Somalia. The members of the Council encouraged greater efforts

from all of Somalia's political leadership to work together to quickly establish an inclusive and representative government. The members underscored their determination to continue to support all international efforts aimed at ending the threat posed by Al-Shabaab and creating a conducive atmosphere for peacebuilding and sustainable development in Somalia. They also recalled their significant support to the people and the Federal Government of Somalia, in a sustained and integrated approach.

On 10 February, the President of the Council issued a press statement (SC/11773) on Somalia. The members of the Council welcomed the approval of the Cabinet list issued by the Federal Parliament of Somalia on 9 February. They stressed the need for the Federal Government to accelerate delivery of the milestones of its "Vision 2016". The members stressed the importance of political unity, inclusivity and stability of the Federal Government in Somalia, in order to make swift progress on delivery for the people of Somalia.

On 20 February, the President of the Council issued a press statement (SC/11791) on Somalia. The members of the Council strongly condemned the attack on 20 February on the Central Hotel in Mogadishu perpetrated by Al-Shabaab, which caused the death and injury of many innocent Somalis, including government officials and Members of Parliament as well as staff at the hotel. They expressed their deep sympathy and condolences to the families of the victims, many of whom were gathered for Friday prayers, as well as to the people and Government of the Federal Republic of Somalia. The members reiterated their support to all actors working towards more peace and stability in Somalia, including both UNSOM and AMISOM.

Somalia/Eritrea

On 26 February, the Security Council held closed consultations and was briefed by the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolutions 751 (1992) and 1907 (2009) concerning Somalia and Eritrea, Ambassador Rafael Darío Ramírez Carreño, Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, on the work of the Committee. The Chair reported on the informal consultations held by the Sanctions Committee on 13 February 2015 as well as the priorities of the work of the Monitoring Group. Council members expressed support for the work of the Committee and its Monitoring Group and called for full implementation of the sanctions measures mandated by relevant Security Council resolutions.

Sudan/South Sudan

On 6 February, the Security Council held closed consultations and was briefed by the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan, Ambassador Rafael Darío Ramírez Carreño, Permanent Representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, on the work of the Committee. Ambassador Ramírez reported to the Council on the Committee's discussion on the final report submitted by its Panel of Experts (see S/2015/31) as well as on the scheduled activities of the Committee for the next reporting period. Council members expressed support for the work of the Chair of the Committee and its Panel of Experts and called for increased cooperation between the Government of the Sudan and the Committee as well as its Panel of Experts.

On 12 February, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2200 (2015) extending the mandate of the Panel of Experts of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan until 12 March 2016.

United Nations Interim Security Forces for Abyei

On 10 February, the Security Council was briefed in consultations of the whole by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hervé Ladsous, on the work of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA). Mr. Ladsous indicated that no substantive progress had been made during the reporting period regarding the implementation of the 20 June 2011 Agreement, and that mechanisms such as the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee, the Joint Border Monitoring and Verification Mechanism and the Joint Political and Security Mechanism continued to be at a standstill. UNISFA had recorded several criminal activities committed against Abyei communities and United Nations Mine Action Service personnel, which resulted in loss of life, injuries and property loss and damage. The Secretary-General, in his report to the Council (S/2015/77), recommended that the mandate of UNISFA be extended for another four months. Council members expressed their concerns over the stalled efforts by the parties to resolve the issue of Abyei, the public administration and the rule of law vacuum as well as the growing security risk arising from community conflict and criminal activities, which could further exacerbate the worrisome security and humanitarian situation in Abyei. They called on the Governments of the Sudan and South Sudan to swiftly revitalize the work of the Abyei Joint Oversight Committee without precondition, and expressed their objection to any unilateral action that might aggravate intercommunal relations. Members of the Council also voiced their appreciation and strong support for UNISFA in the active implementation of its mandate.

On 26 February, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2205 (2015) extending the mandate of UNISFA until 15 July 2015.

United Nations Mission in South Sudan

On 24 February, the Security Council held a briefing followed by closed consultations on the work of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), during which the Council members were briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hervé Ladsous, and the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights, Ivan Simonovic. The Permanent Representative of South Sudan to the United Nations participated in the open briefing under rule 37 of the provisional rules of procedures of the Council. Mr. Ladous pointed out that the security situation in South Sudan remained disturbing, with numerous recorded and confirmed violations of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, which was a direct illustration of the parties' continued lack of political will to take the negotiations seriously and make the necessary compromises at the peace talks in Addis Ababa. He said there was an urgent need to reinforce the mediation efforts as well as to impose consequences on the parties. Mr. Simonovic briefed the Council on his latest field mission to South Sudan, where the number of displaced persons and refugees continued to grow and where thousands more civilians had died and further humanitarian law and human rights violations had been committed by both sides. He stressed that it was of the utmost

importance that the Council remain seized of the question of accountability. Council members expressed support to the mediation efforts of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and concern over the alarming security and humanitarian situation in South Sudan, and urged both parties to immediately cease violence and participate in peace talks in good faith. Some members mentioned the urgent necessity for the Council to apply pressure to the warring parties, so that they would reach a final agreement by the 5 March deadline as set by IGAD. One member circulated to the Council a draft resolution on establishing a targeted sanctions regime on South Sudan.

Middle East

Lebanon

On 4 February, the Security Council discussed under "Other matters" the situation in Lebanon. Following the meeting, the President of the Council issued a press statement (SC/11766) condemning in the strongest terms the killing of a Spanish member of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), which occurred in the context of exchanges of fire along the Blue Line on 28 January 2015. The members of the Council expressed their deepest sympathy to the family of the fallen peacekeeper and to the Government of Spain. The members looked forward to the immediate completion of a full and comprehensive investigation by UNIFIL to determine the facts and circumstances of the incident.

Syrian Arab Republic

On 6 February, the Security Council held closed consultations and was briefed by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Angela Kane, on the implementation of resolution 2118 (2013). Ms. Kane said that further progress had been made in the implementation of the resolution, with 1 out of 12 remaining chemical weapons production facilities already destroyed and the destruction of 2 others under way, and 97.8 per cent of all declared chemicals destroyed. Concerning the initial declaration of the Syrian Arab Republic and subsequent amendments, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons' (OPCW) Declaration Assessment Team paid its seventh visit to the country. The Executive Council of OPCW held meetings to discuss the third report of the organization's fact-finding mission on the allegations of the use of toxic chemicals as weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic and adopted a decision. The Syrian Arab Republic also provided OPCW with information regarding allegations of the use of chlorine as a weapon by non-State actors in the country.

Members of the Council exchanged views on the implementation of resolution 2118 (2013). Some members recognized the progress made so far and called for further cooperation between the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and OPCW. They also emphasized the importance of seeking a political solution through dialogue among the Syrian parties. The reports of the OPCW fact-finding mission were also discussed during the consultations, with some members expressing concern about the conclusions of the reports and calling for the Council to take appropriate actions, while another member questioned the conclusions as well as the methodologies upon which the conclusions had been drawn.

On 6 February, the Council was briefed under "Other matters" by Ambassador Vitaly Churkin, Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, on the first inter-Syrian consultative meeting, held in Moscow from 26 to 29 January, facilitated by Russia. Mr. Churkin said that this was the first time that representatives of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and various opposition groups and civil society had sat at the same table. The participants discussed the way forward to end violence in the Syrian Arab Republic and achieve a comprehensive political solution, and agreed on the 11-point Moscow principles. The meeting was well received by its participants and it was agreed that another meeting, facilitated by the Russian Federation, would be arranged in the near future. Following the briefing, some members of the Council emphasized the importance of a political solution to the Syrian crisis. They also welcomed the progress achieved at the Moscow consultative meeting and expressed appreciation for the efforts made by the Russian Federation to organize the meeting.

On 17 February, the Council held closed consultations and was briefed by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Syria, Staffan de Mistura, on the recent developments in the political solution to the crisis. Mr. de Mistura reported on his efforts to promote his "freeze" initiative and warned about the escalation of fighting on the ground, in particular in the north of Aleppo, rural Damascus, Deir ez-Zor and Hasakeh. Emphasizing that the Syrian crisis could not be won by military means, he called on all Syrian parties to respond positively to the "freeze" initiative. He informed the Council that during his recent visit to the Syrian Arab Republic, the Government had expressed its willingness to suspend all aerial attacks and artillery shelling throughout the city of Aleppo for six weeks and to implement the "freeze" initiative in the Salahhadin district of Aleppo. Mr. de Mistura said that he would pay another visit to the Syrian Arab Republic to assess conditions for a freeze. Commending the efforts of the Russian Federation and Egypt to facilitate dialogues between the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic and the opposition groups as well as coordination among the opposition groups, he expressed his hope that those efforts could help to pave the way towards an initiative that brings all parties together under United Nations auspices. Members of the Council unanimously emphasized the importance of seeking a political resolution to the Syrian crisis and commended the efforts of Mr. de Mistura in that regard. Many members welcomed the "freeze" initiative as well as the response from the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to the initiative, and expressed their hope that the initiative could come into effect quickly. They also expressed their appreciation to the Russian Federation and Egypt for their efforts. Some members maintained a cautious attitude towards the "freeze" initiative and the proposal of the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, and emphasized that owing to the offensive taken by the Government in the north of Aleppo, the situation on the ground should be further assessed.

On 26 February, the Council held an open meeting and was briefed by the Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Kyung-Wha Kang, and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, António Guterres, on the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic and the Syrian refugee crisis. Ms. Kang told the Council that despite the efforts of all relevant parties to carry out humanitarian actions in the Syrian Arab Republic, the situation continued to deteriorate. She criticized all parties to the Syrian conflict in their continued military confrontation, which had resulted in

deaths, injuries and displacement of civilians as well as destruction of many civilian facilities such as residential buildings, hospitals, schools and other public infrastructure. She accused the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) for denying aid in Raqqa and Deir ez-Zor. She also pointed to the arbitrary removal by government security personnel of medical supplies from humanitarian aid. She called on the Council to do everything in its power to hold parties accountable and ensure that aid was delivered to people in need. Referring to the efforts of Mr. de Mistura to push for a "freeze" in Aleppo, she expressed the readiness of humanitarian agencies to step up the scale of humanitarian assistance in that city. She also called on all donors to attend the pledging conference in Kuwait and provide funds to the United Nations. Mr. Guterres referred to the more than 3.8 million registered refugees in countries neighbouring the Syrian Arab Republic and said that with depleted resources, deteriorating living conditions and overstretched host communities, the refugee crisis was approaching a dangerous turning point. He emphasized the need to pay greater attention to the conditions of those refugees under 18, in particular over 100,000 refugee children born in exile. He also called upon European and Gulf States to provide further assistance to Syrian refugees.

Representatives of the Syrian Arab Republic, Lebanon and Turkey addressed the Council. The representative of the Syrian Arab Republic blamed terrorist groups for the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in that country and called for greater efforts to tackle terrorism. He also emphasized the importance of adhering to the guiding principles for the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations system. Representatives of Lebanon and Turkey reported on their efforts to receive Syrian refugees and called on the international community to provide assistance to countries neighbouring the Syrian Arab Republic on the basis of the burden-sharing principle. Members of the Council made statements. Consensus was reached around seeking a political solution to the Syrian crisis and supporting the mediation of Special Envoy de Mistura. However, different views were expressed about the next steps. Some members called for pragmatic actions by the Council to ensure the full implementation of relevant resolutions, while others emphasized the importance of consent of host countries and respect for their sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Yemen

On 6 February, the Security Council held consultations of the whole on Yemen under the item "Any other business". At the end of the meeting, the President of the Council read press elements on behalf of members of the Council, expressing grave concern at the announcement by the Houthis that they would break off talks, dissolve parliament and take over all of Yemen's government institutions. The President went on to call, in the strongest terms, for all parties, in particular the Houthis, to abide by the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative, the National Dialogue Conference outcome documents and the Peace and Partnership Agreement, which provide for a Yemeni-led democratic transition. Council members reaffirmed their full support for and commitment to the work of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Yemen, Jamal Benomar, in support of the Yemeni transition process.

On 12 February, the Council held a briefing and closed consultations on the situation in Yemen. *The Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon, and his* Special Adviser on Yemen, Jamal Benomar, briefed the Council on the recent developments in Yemen. The Secretary-General said that the international community must do

everything possible to help Yemen step back from the brink and get the political process back on track. He urged all parties in Yemen to engage in negotiations and abide by the common framework as set forth in the implementation mechanism of the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative, the outcome documents of the National Dialogue Conference and the Peace and National Partnership Agreement. Mr. Benomar expressed regret at the unilateral action taken by Ansarallah on 6 February, stressing that Yemen was at a crossroads. He reported on the mediation efforts he had taken and reaffirmed the commitment of the United Nations to Yemen. Representatives of Yemen and Qatar also made statements to the Council.

During the closed consultations that followed that meeting, Council members expressed grave concerns about the situation in Yemen. Some members urged the Houthis to engage in good faith in the United Nations-brokered negotiations, to normalize the security situation in the capital and other provinces, to relinquish government and security institutions and to refrain from further unilateral actions. Council members reaffirmed their support for, and commitment to, the efforts of Mr. Benomar and stressed the importance of close coordination between the United Nations and international partners, including the Gulf Cooperation Council.

On 15 February, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2201 (2015) on Yemen, reflecting the above-mentioned points, and decided to remain actively seized of the matter.

On 25 February, the President of the Council issued a press statement (SC/11798) on Yemen reiterating the main elements contained in resolution 2201 (2015). The members of the Council called for all parties in Yemen, including the Houthis, to commit to resolving their differences through dialogue and consultation. The members of the Council welcomed the fact that that the legitimate President of Yemen, Abdo Rabbo Mansour Hadi, is no longer under house arrest as well as his intention to engage in good faith in the United Nations-brokered negotiations, and urged all parties to accelerate these negotiations.

Iraq

On 17 February, the Security Council held a briefing and closed consultations on the situation in Iraq. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI), Nickolay Mladenov, briefed the Council on the situation in Iraq as well as the work of UNAMI. Mr. Mladenov presented the second report of the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 2169 (2014) (S/2015/82) and the fifth report of the Secretary-General pursuant to paragraph 4 of resolution 2017 (2013) (S/2015/70) on the issue of missing Kuwaiti and third-country nationals and property to the Council. He said that despite a year-long security crisis and amid ongoing humanitarian concerns in Iraq, there was cause for "paranoid optimism". Iraq's most pressing goal remained to win back territory taken by ISIL. While ISIL continued to commit grave crimes against men, women and children, the country's political, community and religious leaders had coalesced to save their country from terror. In addition, Iraq faced a number of other political, humanitarian and financial challenges. He called on the Iraqi Government to move swiftly on the full implementation of the ministerial programme and the political agreement. Ambassador Mohamed Ali Al-hakim, Permanent Representative of Iraq to the United Nations, also made a statement in the Council. Describing measures taken by the Iraqi Government to deal with the

challenges, he emphasized that ISIL still controlled large swathes of territory and had committed mass atrocities against the Iraqi people. He called on the international community, in particular countries in the region, to further step up counter-terrorism efforts and enhance border control.

In the closed consultations, members of the Council reiterated their support to the Iraqi Government in its efforts to push forward an inclusive political process and security, economic and social reforms; to achieve national reconciliation; and to further improve its relations with neighbouring countries, in particular Kuwait. Members of the Council called for a more coordinated and integrated approach by the international community in supporting Iraq. Members also emphasized the importance of fully implementing resolutions 2170 (2014), 2178 (2014) and 2199 (2015) in order to effectively combat ISIL and other terrorist organizations.

Situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

On 18 February, the Security Council held a briefing and closed consultations on the situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Jeffrey Feltman, briefed the Council. He said that the Israeli-Palestinian conflict threatened to escalate further, which could have damaging consequences for both parties and for the two-State solution. The Secretary-General had reiterated his call to both sides to refrain from taking unilateral steps or actions that might further aggravate current divisions. The situation in Gaza had become increasingly worrisome six months after the conflict; the combination of the failure to rectify the persistent governance and security issues and the slow pace of reconstruction had created an increasingly toxic environment.

During the closed consultations, the Council members called for the resumption of negotiations between the parties, while some members suggested improving the international platform to push forward the negotiations collectively. Council members expressed serious concern and many condemned the continued settlement plan announced by Israel, calling it contrary to international law and a major obstacle to the peace talks, and asked for an immediate and comprehensive halt. Many Council members also stressed the need for improvements to the situation on the ground and called upon the international community to honour their commitment to the reconstruction of Gaza as soon as possible.

Europe

United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

On 6 February, the Security Council held a public meeting on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and heard a briefing by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMIK, Farid Zarif. Mr. Zarif reported the formation of a new government in Kosovo in December 2014 followed by mass protests, and called for "measured" discussions of the issues that sparked the protests so that the new government could make progress on its stated objectives. He called on leaders in Belgrade and Pristina to engage seriously in ongoing dialogue and to make the hard choices required for regional stability. He also urged leaders in Pristina to make further progress in justice, reconciliation, economic and other areas. The First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign

Affairs of Serbia, Ivica Dačić, and Hashim Thaçi of Kosovo both reaffirmed their commitment to the European Union-facilitated dialogue for a sustainable solution.

Members of the Council welcomed the continuation of dialogue on technical matters between Belgrade and Pristina, and expressed their expectation that relations would be normalized and the high-level dialogue between the two sides to resolve outstanding issues resumed. Some members reiterated the continued applicability of resolution 1244 (1999) and supported the role of UNMIK in reducing tensions and promoting cooperation. Some members welcomed the role of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo and the Kosovo Force in maintaining a safe and secure environment in Kosovo.

Letter from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/264)

On 17 February, the President of the Security Council issued a press statement (SC/11784) on Debaltseve. The members of the Council expressed grave concern at the continued fighting in and around Debaltseve, Ukraine, which had resulted in numerous civilian casualties. The members regretted that, despite the announcement of a ceasefire on 15 February, violence had continued in recent days in some parts of eastern Ukraine. The Council called on all parties to immediately cease hostilities, abide by commitments agreed in Minsk, including facilitating access for the Organization for Security and Cooperation (OSCE) Special Monitoring Mission to monitor and verify compliance with the Minsk Agreements, and treat detained individuals humanely.

On 17 February, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2202 (2015) endorsing the "Package of Measures for the Implementation of the Minsk Agreements", adopted on 12 February 2015 in Minsk; welcoming the Declaration by the leaders of the Russian Federation, Ukraine, France and Germany; and calling on all parties to fully implement the "Package of Measures". Some members of the Council made statements after the vote. Many expressed their firm conviction that the resolution of the situation in eastern Ukraine could only be achieved through a peaceful settlement of the current crisis. Some members expressed concern about ongoing intense fighting and called for a comprehensive ceasefire immediately, and stressed the need to ensure access for the monitors. Some members said the Minsk Agreements provided a genuine opportunity to end the tragedy and that all parties should fully implement the Agreements and avoid taking unilateral measures that would contradict the spirit of the Agreements.

Letter from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/136)

On 27 February, the Security Council was briefed by the Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office in Ukraine and Chair of the Trilateral Contact Group, Heidi Tagliavini, and the Head of the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine, Ertugrul Apakan. Ms. Tagliavini said that the situation in eastern Ukraine was at the turning point between further progress towards peace or escalation of conflict. There had been a significant reduction in hostilities in Ukraine and the beginning of the withdrawal of heavy equipment in accordance with the Minsk accords. However, those developments were only the beginning of a process. A sustainable ceasefire and continued de-escalation,

including the withdrawal of heavy military equipment, were indispensable to any further progress.

Mr. Apakan underlined that the Mission was working for the full implementation of the "Package of Measures", which was an integrated whole. He reported to the Council that there had been some indications that both sides were taking steps to comply with their responsibilities under the Minsk package. OSCE had observed the movement of heavy weapons away from the line of contact in several instances, but there was a clear distinction between this activity and being able to verify that those weapons were indeed withdrawn, and safely and securely stored. In order to facilitate, monitor and verify the withdrawal of heavy weapons from a defined security zone, OSCE needed improved and sufficient baseline information, and the same requirement applied to the monitoring of the withdrawal of foreign armed formations and mercenaries. Also, the Mission needed enhanced technological capacity and corresponding expert staff. He added that the Mission would need close cooperation with the United Nations.

After the briefing, the members of the Council held an informal interactive dialogue with Ms. Tagliavini and Mr. Apakan.

Thematic and other issues

Threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts

On 1 February, the President of the Security Council issued a press statement (SC/11762) on the murder of a Japanese citizen, Kenji Goto, by ISIL. The members of the Council strongly condemned this heinous and cowardly murder and underlined the need to bring the perpetrators of these reprehensible acts of terrorism to justice. The members of the Council stressed again that ISIL must be defeated and that the intolerance, violence and hatred it espouses must be stamped out. The members demanded the immediate, safe and unconditional release of all those who are kept hostage by ISIL, Al-Nusra Front and all other individuals, groups, undertakings and entities associated with Al-Qaida. The members further recalled that ISIL is included on the Al-Qaida Sanctions List and is thus subject to the asset freeze and arms embargo contained in resolution 2161 (2014). The Council members reaffirmed the need to combat by all means, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts, and that any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation and wherever, whenever and by whomsoever they are committed.

On 2 February, the President of the Council issued a press statement (SC/11763) on Boko Haram, condemning in the strongest terms the attacks in Nigeria and against Chadian troops in Cameroon. The Council members condemned in the strongest terms the continued escalation of attacks perpetrated by Boko Haram terrorists on 1 February in Maiduguri, Borno State, as well as the increasing attacks in the Lake Chad Basin region, including against the Chadian army contingent deployed to fight Boko Haram in Cameroon at the request and with the collaboration of the Cameroonian authorities, on 29 and 30 January near the border town of Fotokol, in which 4 Chadian soldiers were killed and 12 others injured.

On 3 February, the President of the Council issued a press statement (SC/11764) on the murder of Jordanian air force pilot Muath Al-Kasasbeh. The members of the Council strongly condemned this heinous and cowardly murder and underlined the need to bring the perpetrators of this reprehensible act of terrorism to justice. The members stressed again that ISIL must be defeated and that the intolerance, violence and hatred it espouses must be stamped out. The members of the Council demanded the immediate, safe and unconditional release of all those who are kept hostage by ISIL, Al-Nusra Front and all other individuals, groups, undertakings and entities associated with Al-Qaida. The members of the Council further recalled that ISIL is included on the Al-Qaida Sanctions List and is thus subject to the asset freeze and arms embargo contained in resolution 2161 (2014). The members reaffirmed the need to combat by all means, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts, and that any acts of terrorism are criminal and unjustifiable, regardless of their motivation and wherever, whenever and by whomsoever they are committed.

On 5 February, the President of the Council issued a press statement (SC/11768) on Boko Haram attacks against Chadian troops and civilians along the border between Cameroon and Nigeria, including against the Chadian army contingent deployed to fight Boko Haram in Cameroon and Nigeria, on 3 February, in which 13 Chadian soldiers were killed and 21 others injured, and against the civilian population and Cameroonian troops, in which at least 3 Cameroonian soldiers and a sizeable number of civilians were killed, in Fotokol on 4 February.

On 12 February, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2199 (2015) on threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts, which further strengthened international measures to constrain the financing of ISIL, also known as Daesh, Al-Nusra Front and all other individuals, groups, undertakings and entities associated with Al-Qaida, including new measures on the trade in oil, oil products and antiquities from the Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq. After the adoption of resolution 2199 (2015), some members of the Council took the floor to reaffirm their commitment to the fight against terrorism.

On 13 February, the Council issued a press statement on Boko Haram attacks in Cameroon, Chad and Niger (SC/11780). The Council condemned in the strongest terms the attacks perpetrated by Boko Haram terrorists on 13 February in Ngouboua, Chad, against civilians, as well as the 8 February attack in Kerawa, Cameroon, and the attacks of 6-8 February in Diffa, the Niger. The Council reiterated its determination to combat all forms of terrorism, in accordance with its responsibilities under the Charter of the United Nations.

On 15 February, the President of the Council issued a press statement on the murder of 21 Egyptians (SC/11782). The members of the Council strongly condemned the heinous and cowardly apparent murder in Libya of 21 Egyptian Coptic Christians by an affiliate of ISIL. This crime once again demonstrated the brutality of ISIL, which is responsible for thousands of crimes and abuses against people from all faiths, ethnicities and nationalities, and without regard to any basic value of humanity. The members of the Council expressed their deep sympathy and condolences to the family of the victims, to the Government of Egypt as well as to the families of all victims of ISIL. The members reiterated their strong

condemnation of the persecution of individuals and entire communities on the basis of their religion or belief.

On 20 February, the President of the Council issued a press statement on Libya (SC/11792). The members of the Council strongly condemned the bomb attack in al-Qubbah, Libya, on 20 February, claimed by an affiliate of ISIL, also known as Daesh, resulting in dozens of deaths and injuries. They expressed their deep sympathy and condolences to the families of the victims of this heinous act and wished a speedy recovery to those injured. The members of the Council stressed again that ISIL must be defeated and that the intolerance, violence and hatred it espouses must be stamped out.

On 25 February, the President of the Council issued a press statement (SC/11799) on abduction of Syrian Christians by ISIL. The members of the Council strongly condemned the abduction of more than 100 Assyrians by ISIL, also known as Daesh, on 23 February 2015 in the north-east of the Syrian Arab Republic as well as destruction and desecration of Christian and other religious sites. Such crimes once again demonstrated the brutality of ISIL, which is responsible for thousands of crimes and abuses against people from all faiths, ethnicities and nationalities and without regard to any basic value of humanity.

On 27 February, the President of the Council issued a press statement (SC/11804) on destruction by ISIL of religious and cultural artifacts in Mosul. The members of the Council strongly condemned the ongoing barbaric terrorist acts in Iraq committed by ISIL, also known as Daesh, including the abduction of 100 Sunni tribesmen from outside Tikrit on 25 February; the immolation of 45 Iraqis in Baghdad on 17 February; ongoing daily attacks targeting civilians in Baghdad; and the deliberate destruction of irreplaceable religious and cultural artifacts housed in the Mosul Museum and burning of thousands of books and rare manuscripts from the Mosul Library. The members reiterated their condemnation of the destruction of cultural heritage in Iraq and the Syrian Arab Republic, particularly by ISIL.

Maintenance of international peace and security

On 23 February, on the initiative of China, occupying the presidency of the Security Council for February, the Council held an open debate on the subject "Maintenance of international peace and security: reflect on history, reaffirm the strong commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations". The meeting was chaired by the Foreign Minister of China, Wang Yi. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, together with several other foreign ministers and senior officials from capitals, attended the meeting. Eighty-two representatives of Member States and regional organizations made statements on the subject during the meeting.

In his remarks, the Secretary-General emphasized the importance of upholding the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter. He said that commitment to the prevention of armed conflict through the peaceful settlement of disputes and the protection of human rights lay at the heart of the Charter. The Secretary-General pointed out that serious violations of human rights would weaken sovereignty. He emphasized that the less sovereignty was viewed as a wall or a shield, the better the prospects would be for protecting people and solving shared problems.

In their statements, Member States reaffirmed their commitment to the Charter's principles, particularly those in support of collective efforts for the maintenance of international peace and security and the primary role of the Council in that regard, as well as the need for early action to ensure the prevention and peaceful settlement of conflicts. The Chinese Foreign Minister stressed the importance of establishing a new type of international relations with win-win cooperation as the core and, together with many other Council members, called for the Council to adopt conflict prevention measures and restore peace and reconstruction in a prompt manner. They emphasized that all countries should strengthen awareness on cooperation and resolve the complex challenges through negotiations and cooperation. They also pointed to the vital role of the principles of sovereignty, equality, mutual respect for choice of development path and social system, adherence to international law and the norms of international relations and refraining from interference into others' internal affairs. Some members called for early and preventive measures to be taken by the Council to respond to early warning signs of conflict. Regional and thematic issues such as Ukraine, the Syrian Arab Republic, the Middle East peace process, the situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and reform of the Security Council were also raised during the open debate.

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe)

On 24 February, the Security Council heard a briefing by the First Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia and Chairperson-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, Ivica Dačić. Mr. Dačić briefed the Council on the Serbian OSCE Chair's priorities and the organization's partnership with the United Nations. He emphasized the need to find ways to rebuild trust and confidence and re-engage in joint efforts to strengthen security across the whole OSCE region. OSCE had been continuously trying to find a political solution to the Ukraine crisis, and he called on all relevant parties to adhere to the "Package of Measures" agreed upon in Minsk on 12 February.

The Council members welcomed the efforts of OSCE to maintain regional peace and stability. They called on all parties concerned to fully implement Council resolution 2202 (2015) as well as the "Package of Measures" agreed upon in Minsk, and work towards a durable peace and stability in Ukraine. Some members emphasized the importance of full access for the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission to all the areas to enable it to supervise the implementation of the "Package of Measures".

Non-proliferation (Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

On 26 February, the Security Council was briefed in closed consultations by the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006), Ambassador Román Oyarzun, Permanent Representative of Spain to the United Nations. Ambassador Oyarzun briefed the Council on the work of the Committee during the period from 10 November 2014 to 25 February 2015, including its ongoing consideration of the 2015 final report of the Panel of Experts established pursuant to resolution 1874 (2009) (see S/2015/131), the conclusion of the update of the Committee's guidelines and a letter requesting more information regarding the proposal of the International Committee of the Red Cross for

assistance to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and discussed the Panel's monitoring of the implementation of sanctions provisions. The Chair also noted that during the reporting period the Committee had received two additional implementation reports from Member States and that the number of States that had reported on implementation now stood at 98.

Some Council members expressed their concern that there were no indications that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was willing to abandon its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programmes, and urged the Democratic People's Republic to fulfil its obligations without delay. Other Council members affirmed that dialogue and consultation was the only way to resolve the nuclear issue in the Korean Peninsula, and that all the parties concerned should exercise restraint, avoid confrontation, de-escalate the tensions in the Korean Peninsula and create favourable conditions for the resumption the Six-Party Talks.

Several Council members called on the Committee to take timely and appropriate action on the recommendations contained in the final report. They expressed concern over relevant activities of the designated Democratic People's Republic of Korea entity Ocean Maritime Management Company, which has renamed most of the associated vessels, and called for the robust implementation by all Member States of the provisions of the Council resolutions against the designated entity. Other Council members stated that the report needed serious examination by their capitals and stressed that any follow-up action should be taken by consensus by the Committee with prudence, so as to avoid having a negative impact on the situation in the Korean Peninsula. The view was also expressed that strengthening sanctions in the name of clarifying information should be avoided. On the recommendation concerning the exemptions for embargoes as long as the items are confirmed to be for solely humanitarian purposes, some Council members saw the impracticality of this recommendation while others emphasized its merit and the need for the Committee to continually address this issue.